MARVEL
newuniversal
WARREN ELLIS · SALVADOR LARROCA
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PREVIOUSLY IN newuniversal

WARREN ELLIS · SALVADOR LARROCA

The evening of March 2, 2006 started like any other. But at 06.49 UTC, the sky ignited, illuminated by the most startling celestial phenomenon ever witnessed by the human race: the White Event. And from the wake of the White Event, a handful of humans emerged as something more...

In Oklahoma, KENNETH CONNELL manifested superhuman abilities while held at gunpoint by a man accusing him of murder. After obliterating the Optima Down Sheriff's Station and its inhabitants, Connell fled to the Wichita Mountains...where he encountered three strangers who referred to themselves as Starbrands.

Desperate to find Connell, IZANAMI RANDALL used her newfound abilities and traveled through the Superflow to Oklahoma. To her surprise, the Army and the Air Force were also converging on Optima Down, armed with nuclear weapons and on a mission to exterminate Connell. Izzy managed to reach Connell first and pulled him into the Superflow, narrowly escaping nuclear attack.

Their disappearance did not go unnoticed...

new universal TUMBLE

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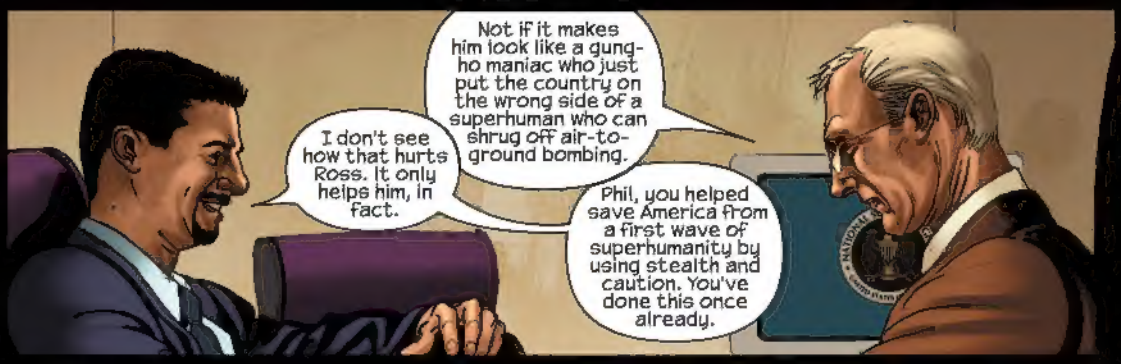
+ SAN FRANCISCO

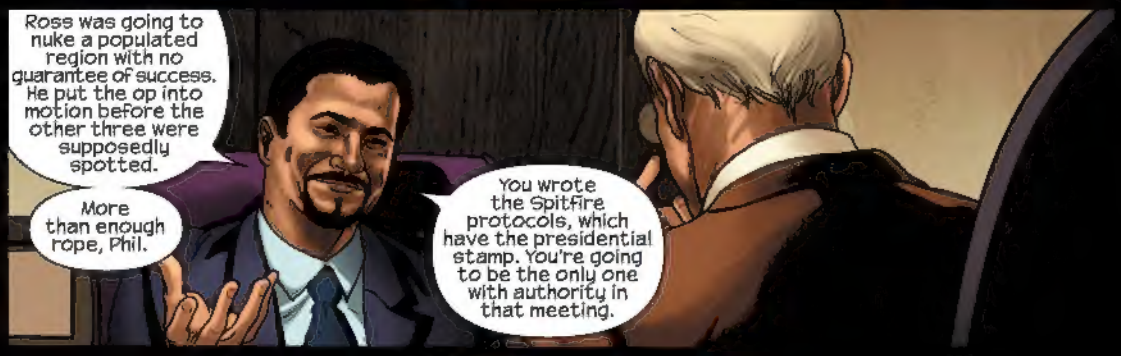
Whoo. That's never not going to be weird.
I have a question.
Yeah.
Can someone tell me, in real simple words, exactly what is going on?
Because I've got to tell you, I've been asking that question kind of a lot, and I still don't have a straight answer.
Okay. Let me give this a shot.
The entire universe is crisscrossed with, like, highways. And in those highways the laws of physics and stuff work really differently?
And Earth is stuck in one of those highways now? And when that happens, the universal system sends four machines to make the changeover easier.
You've got one, I've got one, and, y'know, so do two other people.
You and yours got noticed, I guess, and they sent the army after you.
So I pulled you out and brought you home. Which is San Francisco, by the way.

When my machine switched on, I started getting instructions from our neighbors, who are like, down the highway from us?
So I've got a little bit of a cheat sheet for what happens next.
I've got to pull the four of us together. Which has got more important now that someone wants to blow you up with airplanes.
I met people from the future. And from other... other planets. I think.
I don't know what's real anymore.
You and me both.
I work in a manhua store.
What do we do now?
Great.

+ NSA
PROJECT SPITFIRE
GOLD CLEARANCE PRESENT ID FIRST
It was here? Put in another request to DD/OPS, I want a transcript of the hot-channel chatter from CJCS, I want to know exactly what Ross said --
Phil.
Director. I thought you were en route to Washington.
Guys, can you give us the office? Thanks.

Pack a bag, Phil. I'm sending you to the White House.
You want me to talk to the Chief of Staff?
I want you to brief the President.
Sir. I don't brief the President. You do.
We have entered a new condition, Phil. NSA, CIA, FBI, ISA are being pulled in for a presidential brief.
As is Ross.
It would strongly appear that Ross acted without the President's command.
So the President is now pooling advice on how to move next. Possibly looking for rope to hang Ross with.
I'm sending you instead of me.
Why?
Because I want you to scare the crap out of the President, Phil.
I don't understand.
I want you to tell her about the Fireworks. About the beginnings of Project Spitfire.
I want you to speak as the most knowledgeable man in the world about the emergence of superhumans. Which you are.
Tell all your stories. Scare the crap out of her.


I don't see how that hurts Ross. It only helps him, in fact.
Not if it makes him look like a gung-ho maniac who just put the country on the wrong side of a superhuman who can shrug off air-to-ground bombing.
Phil, you helped save America from a first wave of superhumanity by using stealth and caution. You've done this once already.


Ross was going to nuke a populated region with no guarantee of success. He put the op into motion before the other three were supposedly spotted.
More than enough rope, Phil.
You wrote the Spitfire protocols, which have the presidential stamp. You're going to be the only one with authority in that meeting.

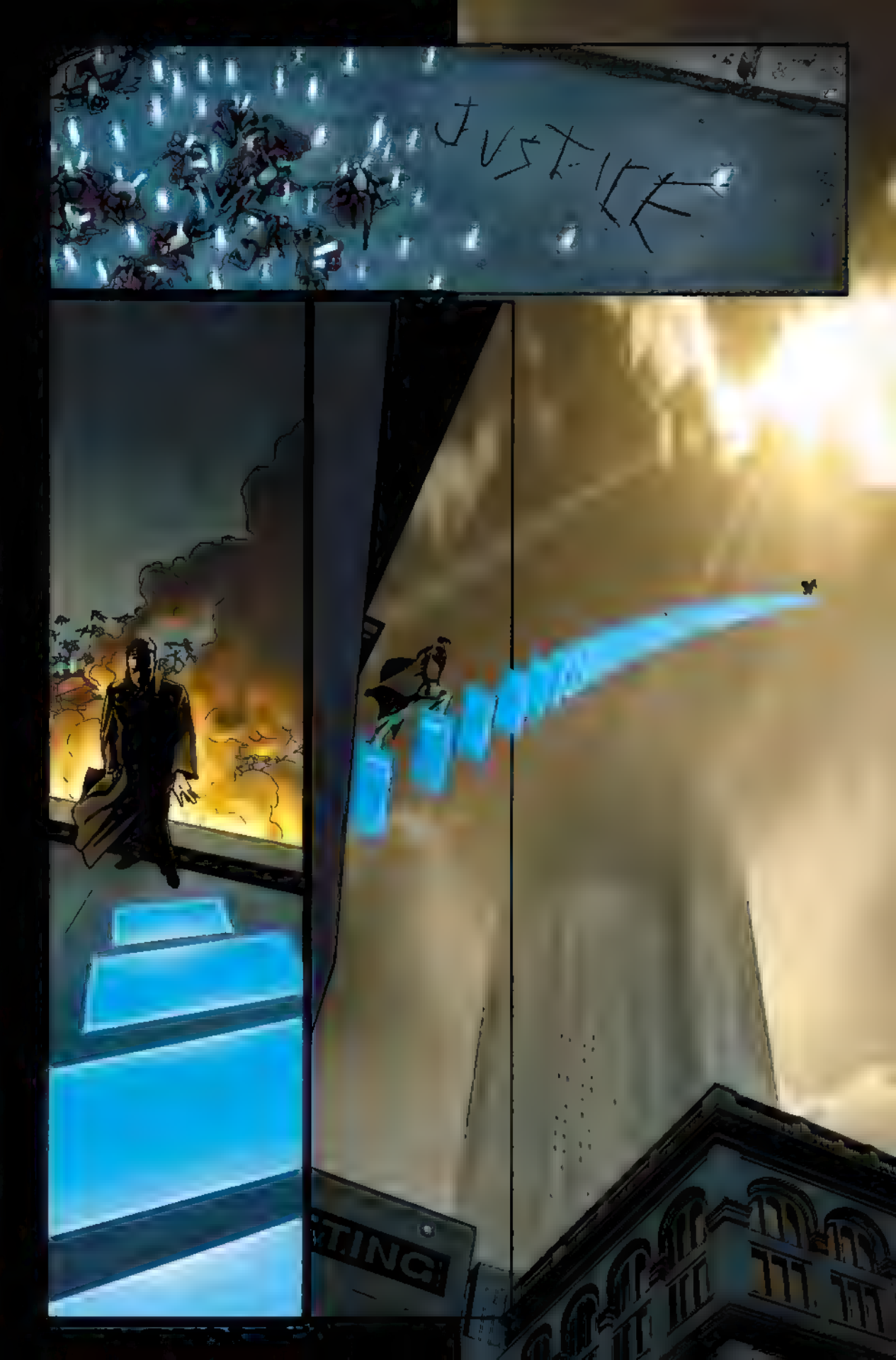
But that sighting of three people accompanying Connell does put Ross inside the protocol. It may make him look prescient.
None of them are there now. And Ken Connell's the only superhuman we've seen.
And where are they now? Who were they, even?

We needed to *learn,* Phil. And now Connell's vanished under cover of a firestorm and there's no evidence that the other three are anything but pink mist now.
We need to be running this. *You* need to be running this.
Go scare the crap out of the President, Phil. A car's waiting at your house.

+ NEW YORK CITY
All dead. All dead.
Where do people in Hell go when they die?
Can the doomed fall deeper?

You're sick. You're all so damn sick with your crime and corruption.
There's not one of you who hasn't hurt someone innocent.
It's no wonder you're down here in hell with me.

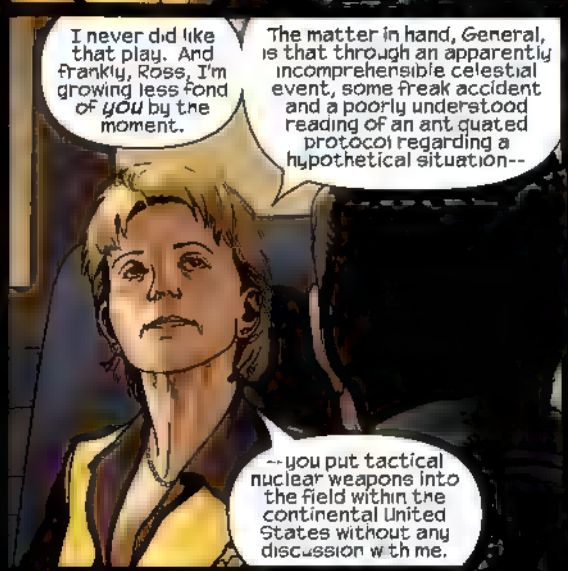
I'm not sorry.

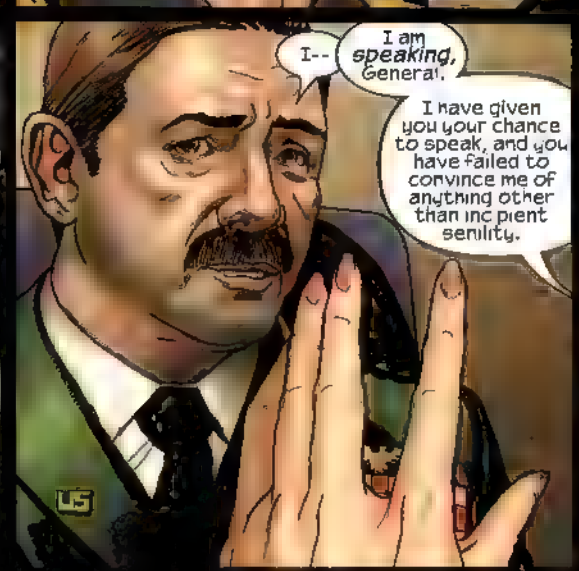

JUSTICE
TING

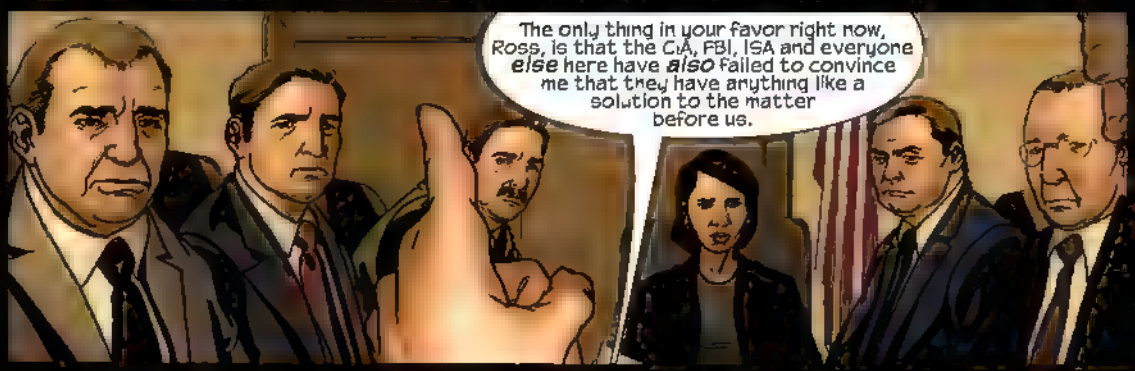
Does anyone feel like time's moving faster?

Madame President?
All day. Things have just seemed jerky and disjointed
Madame President, if we could keep to the matter at hand

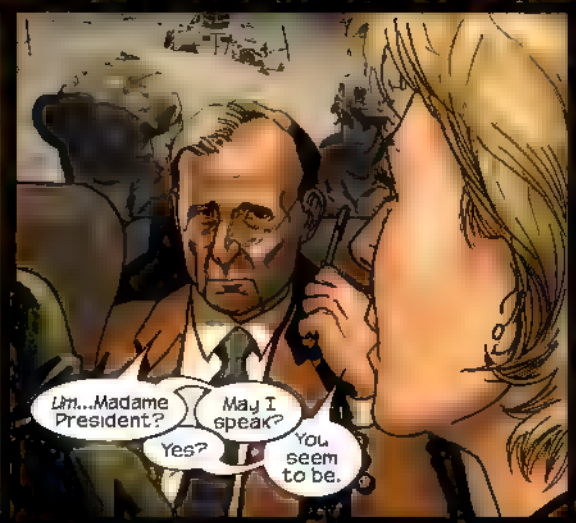
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray
The time is out of joint.
O cursed spite, that ever I was born to set it right.


I never did like that play. And frankly, Ross, I'm growing less fond of *you* by the moment.
The matter in hand, General, is that through an apparently incomprehensible celestial event, some freak accident and a poorly understood reading of an antiquated protocol regarding a hypothetical situation--
--you put tactical nuclear weapons into the field within the continental United States without any discussion with me.


I--
I am *speaking*, General.
I have given you your chance to speak, and you have failed to convince me of anything other than incipient senility.


The only thing in your favor right now, Ross, is that the CIA, FBI, NSA and everyone *else* here have *also* failed to convince me that they have anything like a solution to the matter before us.

That matter, apparently, being the emergence of a new kind of human being in the United States following the White Event.


Um...Madame President?
May I speak?
Yes?
You seem to be.

I just...are you...I'm just a little confused. Are you questioning the evidence of superhumans in America?
I mean, as well as the procedures offered to you by everyone else here.

And you are, again?
Philip Voight, ma'am. NSA, sent here by Director Rockall in his place.
And why was that, again?

Because I'm the only man in the room who's killed superhumans, Madame President.

I'm here because this has all happened before, in the 1950's, following the Fireworks. Another *"celestial event."*

A great spray of lights in the sky, a free firework display for all the Earth.

And it began a month later. The reports. The man who wasn't there. The weeping woman with the corrupt cop who had been turned inside out.

And we resolved simply to watch. To gather information. To try and understand what had happened, that such people could walk among us.

And when they began to meet, we did nothing. And when they began to fight, we did nothing.

And when they fell in love...it took us a long time to understand the ramifications.

The protocol in question, which I wrote, concerns the potential for superhumans to meet... and breed.

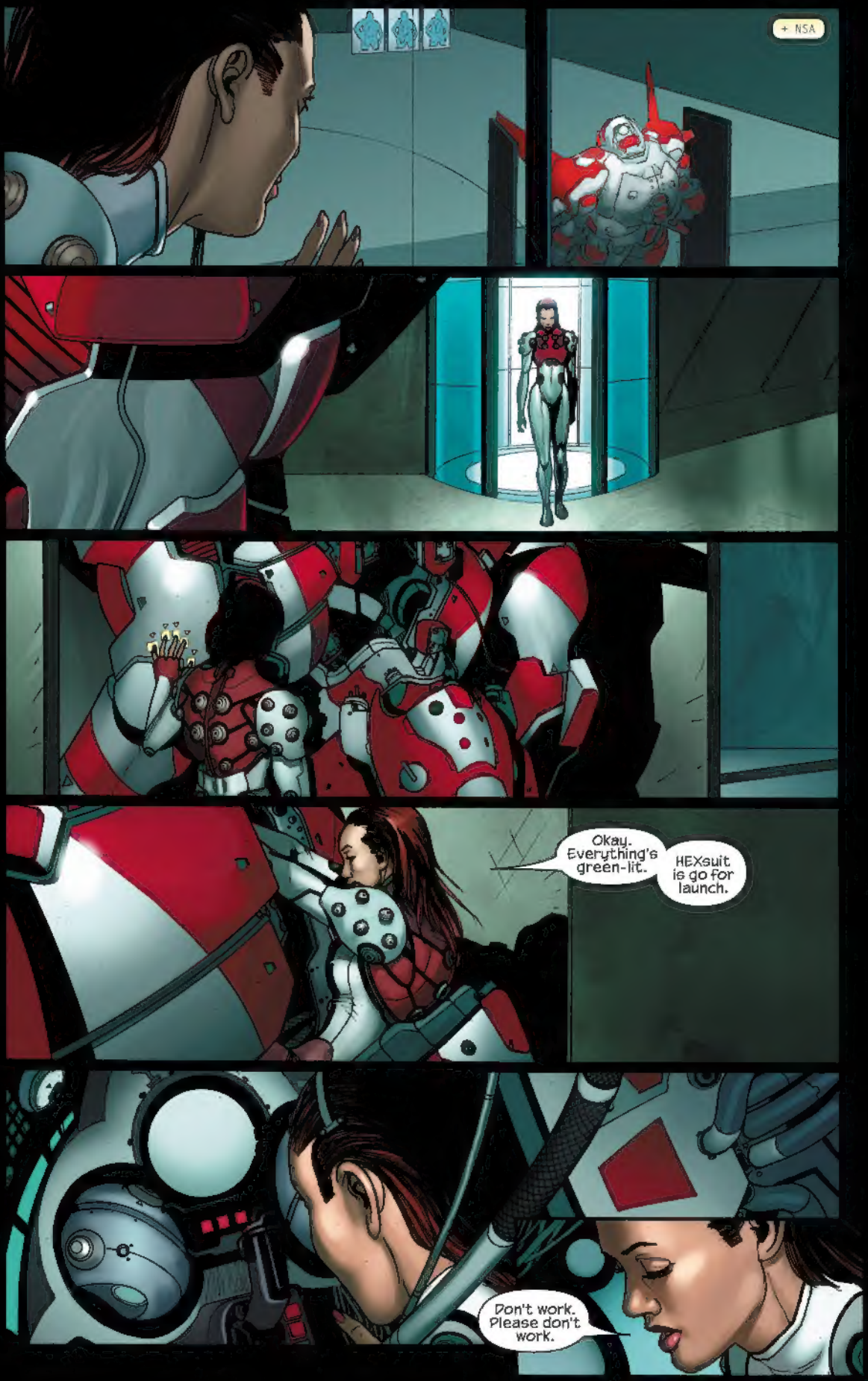
If these things are physically superior to us, then there's a clear and present danger that they could outbreed us

If these things band together for protection and then begin to reproduce, no human on earth is safe. No one.

Madame President, this could not be a clearer explanation of why I chose to act as I did.
Listen to the man. He has literally decades of medical and scientific data proving that creatures more than human walked this earth.
Do you want them *reproducing*? Who knows how *quickly* they reproduce?
Mr. Voight.
Do you agree with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?
No, ma'am, I do not.
We had a saying, in the original Project Spitfire: "*Bombs cause wars. Accidents cause funerals.*"
Major military actions are quite simply going to cause the superhumans to find each other and band together more quickly.
And what did *you* do in the fifties that was so special? You must've been a teenager.
Your Project Spitfire fudged the documentation, or didn't give it all up. So you tell me, Voight --
In 1959, I shot the first superhuman baby to death.

Don't ever even imply that I'm not committed to this, General Ross.
Don't ever assume I would do less than anyone else to end this threat.
And don't, please, believe that you have the answer to this. You will kill us all, sir.
This isn't going to be solved with bombs. We will end this only by killing them quietly, carefully and secretly, up close.
We will achieve this only by the broad and deep and focused gathering of domestic intelligence, which is the expertise and remit of the National Security Agency.
As per Executive Order 44723, lifting the prohibition on acquiring information concerning the domestic activities of United States persons, which you signed, Madame President.
With your permission, now, ma'am, I'd like to return to Fort Meade. There is much to be done.
Mm.
Mr. Voight, you are now my interim senior advisor on the White Event situation. I'll talk to Rockall.
Madame President--
You, General, are going to advise me on the Chinese demand to know why we put nuclear weapons control in the field.

--NO EXPLANATION GIVEN YET OF THE EXPLOSIONS UP IN THE MOUNTAINS, NOR WHY THE SUPPOSED ARMY WAR GAMES WERE USING LIVE AMMO--
--STILL CHAOS DOWNTOWN AS EMERGENCY SERVICES CONTINUE TO MOVE BODIES FOLLOWING WHAT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN A SPREE SNIPER INCIDENT--
--UNCONFIRMED REPORTS SAY THE SNIPER WAS AIRLIFTED OFF A ROOFTOP BY A HELICOPTER--
--AND ALSO THAT THE WORD "JUSTICE" WAS CUT INTO THE SIDEWALK AT THE SCENE, MIRRORING THE SAME WORD FOUND PAINTED ON THE WALL OF THE ROOM POLICE DETECTIVE JOHN TENSEN WAS ABDUCTED FROM--
JUSTICE


+ NSA
Okay. Everything's green-lit.
HEXsuit is go for launch.
Don't work. Please don't work.

Dammit.
Okay. Okay. Go to battle aspect and deploy.
Great. Just great.
I've made something for Phil Voight to kill me with.
TO BE CONTINUED...